

# FACT SHEET



## **Economy Products Site Shenandoah, Iowa**

**March 2001**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This fact sheet provides updated information on the Economy Products Site. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 7 plans to begin work this spring to address pesticide-contaminated soil at the site. The site is located at 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Southwest Road in Shenandoah, Iowa. The site consists of the Factory Place facility, which is the former Economy Products Site, four nearby residential yards and a railroad right-of-way. EPA is conducting this action under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA), commonly known as Superfund.

### **BACKGROUND**

Agricultural pesticides were formulated and packaged at the Economy Products facility from 1961 to 1973. In 1973, a fire destroyed Economy Products' main packaging area, a warehouse where chemicals were stored, and another building next to the warehouse. As a result, pesticides were deposited on the facility property, on several residential properties next to the facility, and on the railroad right-of-way across the street.

EPA conducted soil and ground water sampling at the site to determine the extent of the contamination. Pesticides such as aldrin, dieldrin, endrin, lindane, heptachlor, 4,4-DDD, 4,4-DDT, chlordane and toxaphene were found. Some of these substances have been banned or their use restricted because of the adverse effects they may have to human health and the environment.

The Earl May Seed and Nursery purchased the Economy Products property in 1976. Earl May used the facility for the storage of nursery stock until about September 1999, when they moved the storage operation to a larger facility outside Shenandoah. The facility was deeded to Factory Place, L.C., in 1999.

### **THE CLEANUP**

In April 1999, EPA recommended a method to address the contaminated soil on the Factory Place property and on the residential and railroad right-of-way properties. Before EPA made a final decision,

the public was asked to comment on the recommended cleanup method. Since 1999, EPA has been negotiating a settlement agreement with Earl May and Factory Place to pay for part of the cleanup. EPA has made a cleanup decision for the site, which includes the following:

At the residential properties and the railroad right-of-way, the soil with elevated levels of pesticides will be removed, replaced with clean soil and covered with grass. The contaminated soil will be disposed of at an approved landfill.

Because of the nature and extent of the contamination, and the difference in the way the properties are used, the Factory Place property will be cleaned up differently than the residential and railroad right-of-way properties.

A process known as thermal desorption will be used to treat the contaminated soil at the Factory Place property. Thermal desorption heats the soil to a high temperature and separates the contaminants from the soil. It may be done *in situ* (in place) or *ex situ*. *Ex situ* thermal desorption involves excavating the contaminated soil and placing it in a heating unit. As the soil is heated, the contaminants vaporize and are treated. *In situ* thermal treatment uses a thermal blanket or thermal wells to heat the soil in place, so excavation is not necessary. The soil is heated by the thermal wells or blanket, the contaminants vaporize and are treated. Both of these methods have been proven to be effective and safe.

## **NEXT STEPS**

EPA is currently evaluating both *in situ* or *ex situ* thermal treatment for the Factory Place property. When the evaluation is completed, EPA will provide specific details of the cleanup such as a schedule of cleanup activities and the size and location of the treatment unit. A schedule of activities for the cleanup of the residential and railroad right-of-way properties will also be provided. EPA plans to hold a meeting in Shenandoah, before the start of the thermal treatment, to answer any questions you may have.

## **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

Site-related documents are available for public review at the Shenandoah Public Library, 201 S. Elm, Shenandoah, Iowa. If you have questions or need more information on the site, please contact:

Diane Huffman, Community Involvement Coordinator  
EPA Region 7  
901 N. 5<sup>th</sup> Street  
Kansas City, Kansas 66101  
(913) 551-7003, Toll-free 1-800-223-0425  
E-mail: [huffman.diane@epa.gov](mailto:huffman.diane@epa.gov)